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PRESS RELEASE

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New Waste Removal Carts, Automated Collection Prove Successful

Kerrville, Texas (August 1, 2016) – It's been one year since the City of Kerrville and Republic Services made the switch to standardized carts and an automated waste collection system, and the city is excited to share the positive results of this change with residents.

One reason the city elected to switch to uniform waste carts, was to increase the overall recycling capacity. The previous recycling bins only had an 18 gallon capacity, and during wet weather, recyclables would often become soiled. As a result of contamination, those soiled recyclables usually were sent to the landfill.

The city's goal is to divert as much waste away from the landfill as possible through recycling and yard waste programs. The city calculates how much waste is diverted from the landfill by tracking the amount of recycling and yard waste collected each month and dividing that by the total amount of waste collected each month.

The current waste diversion rate is between 25% and 30%, which is a significant improvement over the previous system. Prior to issuing the recycling carts, the diversion rate

averaged 10% to 15% per month. The higher diversion rates are more beneficial to the environment.

“The diversion rates that we are currently seeing are great signs that this community is participating in recycling. Several citizens have told me they are glad the new carts were issued and they are recycling more due to the increased capacity,” said David Barrera, Assistant Director of Public Works.

The new carts have also aided in enhancing the overall appearance of city streets. Previously, debris and litter often spilled from bags or smaller receptacles prior to and during collection. Now that residents have one uniform container, large enough to store all waste, crews have observed a significant reduction in the amount of area waste pollution.

The additional opportunities to discard bulk items have also aided in the overall beautification of the city. Residents now have more opportunities to remove items and prevent code violations through bulk waste collection. There are now two curbside collections that take place each year and two additional opportunities for residents to obtain a voucher for bulk waste drop off throughout the year. Prior to this change, residents were allowed one curbside collection opportunity to discard bulk items. Monthly yard waste collections have remained the same, and are still very popular.

Daily reports from Republic Services have also produced valuable data about the recent changes to the city’s waste collection system. These daily reports are generated from drivers who collect solid waste. A unique system allows Republic Services to track any issues that may prevent or hinder collection, for example, if a resident does not have the waste cart placed out on time.

Information from these daily reports is sent to operation managers and city staff to be used as a reference tool for customer service. Issues commonly reported include:

- Large items wedged in the cart; impeding the removal of other waste products
- Improperly placed carts; cart handles should face a resident's property, not the street, to allow for proper collection
- Overloaded carts that cannot be collected due to the risk of spillage
- Carts not placed out in time for collection; Residents are advised that routes vary in collection times, so it is very important to place carts out by 7:30am, or the night before
- Carts stored along the curbside or adjacent to the street on non-service days

"I believe that we are now at a point where residents have become comfortable with the cart system. I've seen major improvements since implementation. There are a couple of issues that surface from time to time, but that should start decreasing as we pursue educational outreach tactics," said Barrera.

The City of Kerrville's Solid Waste Division and Republic Services want to thank everyone for their patience and cooperation during the transition process this past year. City staff is in constant communication with Republic Services to ensure that overall customer satisfaction is met.

For additional information on the Solid Waste program, please visit www.kerrvilletx.gov. You may also call Republic Services at 210-304-2700, or the City of Kerrville at 830-257-8000.

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